

Message Text

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ACTION AID-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 INT-05 EB-07 IGA-01 /029 W

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R 020744Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3390

INFO AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : EAID, TC

SUBJECT : REIMBURSABLE ASSISTANCE--BUREC DAM STUDY

REF: STATE 230888

1. EMBASSY APPRECIATES PROMPT AND, MOREOVER, POSITIVE RESPONSE REFTEL RE DAM STUDY. WE TRANSMITTED LETTER TO ALI SHURAFI OCT 1 SETTING FORTH BUREC WILLINGNESS PROCEED WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORT ON REIMBURSABLE BASIS AND OUTLINING TIMING AND COST FACTORS AS PER REFTEL. LETTER STATES THAT NEXT STEP IS FOR UAEG GIVE US FIRM LETTER OF COMMITMENT THAT IT WISHES PROCEED. WE WILL SEEK FOLLOW UP AFTER POST-RAMADAN HOLIDAY PERIOD.

2. IN MEANTIME, EMBASSY'S REVIEW NOT ONLY OF STUDY AND DRAFT AGREEMENT, BUT ALSO OF PROGRESS THIS ENTIRE EXERCISE TO DATE RAISES SEVERAL POINTS/QUESTIONS ON WHICH AID/W WD BUREC COMMENTS WOULD BE WELCOME.

(A) RE COSTS--ALI ARE AGREED THAT FULL COSTS OF ALL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO BE PROVIDED ON THIS PROJECT SHOULD BE BORNE BY UAEG. MOREOVER, UAEG HAS OBVIOUSLY COME TO CONCLUSION THAT IT IS PREPARED TO PAY WHAT IT TAKES TO GET THE BEST-- AND IT CAN CLEARLY AFFORD TO DO SO. BUT EMBASSY NEVERTHELESS WONDERS WHY COSTS ARE AS HIGH AS INDICATED IN DRAFT AGREEMENT AND REFTEL. FOR EXAMPLE, REFTEL INDICATES "PERMANENT" TEAM WILL CONSIST OF ONLY TWO PERSONS, AS COMPARED TO THREE IN DECEMBER DRAFT. WHY IN THIS EVENT DOES OVERALL COST FOR EIGHT-SITE SURVEY STILL GO UP BY AT LEAST \$40,000? IT STRIKES

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US THERE SHOULD INSTEAD BY SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION. RE

INFLATION RATE IN GENERAL, HAS IT REALLY BEEN IN 10-15 PERCENT RANGE FOR TYPES OF COSTS INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY? WHY IS FIGURE FOR "SALARY, BENEFITS AND DIFFERENTIAL" FOR GS 14 TEAM CHIEF SO HIGH? WE UNCLEAR AS TO NUMBER OF MONTHS COVERED BY AMOUNT GIVEN, BUT IF "12.6" CITED IN DRAFT AGREEMENT MEANS JUST OVER ONE YEAR, THEY \$53,200 IS MORE THAN AMBASSADOR GETS FOR LIKE PERIOD. RE ALLOWANCES, WHAT IS INVOLVED? HOUSING SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED AS IT IS STANDARD PRACTICE FOR UAEG TO PROVIDE VILLA OR APARTMENT. THIS ONLY LEAVES COST OF LIVING AND PERHAPS EDUCATION ALLOWANCES THAT COME TO OUR MINDS, WITH TOTALS PRESUMABLY MUCH LESS THAN THOSE INDICATED. WHILE IT NOT OUR INTENT TO QUIBBLE OVER COSTS, WE BELIEVE IT IS INCUMBENT UPON AID AND WASHINGTON AGENCIES TO SEE THAT OUR PROPOSALS REFLECT REALISTIC AND UNPADDED COST ESTIMATES. FROM INFORMAL CONTACTS WE HAVE HAD ON SUBJECT WITH UAEG, IT CLEARLY HAS SOME QUESTIONS IN THIS REGARD AND, AS WE REVIEW FIGURES, WE NOT SURE WE IN POSITION TO PROVIDE ANSWERS.

(B) CONTINUITY OF EFFORT IS ANOTHER POINT WE WISH TO CALL ATTENTION TO. WE RECOGNIZE OF COURSE THAT DELAYS IN PROJECT TO DATE HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY ABU DHABI GOVERNMENT'S DILATORINESS IN PURSUING THIS PROJECT, AND WE WISH TO COMMEND ONCE AGAIN BUREC'S RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT ATTENTION TO THIS PROJECT. THE PROBLEM IS THAT PEOPLE HERE HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE RECOGNIZING NEED FOR TYPICAL LENGTHY PROCEDURES WHICH ARE STANDARD IN HIGHLY DEVELOPED WESTERN COUNTRIES FOR THOROUGH INVESTIGATION, DESIGN, AND FINALLY CONSTRUCTION OF PROJECTS. THEIR PSYCHOLOGY RATHER TENDS TO BE THAT ONCE THEYV MAKE UP THEIR MINDS THEY WANT SOMETHING (AND THEY CAN TAKE YEARS DOING THAT) THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT IMPLEMENTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WE ARE NOT SUGGESTING ANY SHORTCUTTING OR ANY ESSENTIAL SYSTEMATIC PROCEDURES THAT MIGHT BE DETRIMENTAL TO QUALITY OF PROJECT, AND IT IS OF COURSE ON BASIS OF FINAL RESULTS THAT OUR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WILL BE JUDGED. WHAT IS XSPECIFICALLY ON OUR MIND IS CONCERN THAT IF PROJECT IS DIVIDED TOO MUCY IN STAGES THERE MAY BE FURTHER LONG HIATUSES DURING WGICH ABU DHABI AUTHORITIES MAY GET DISTRACTED BY THEIR MANY OTHER CONCERNS AND LOSE INTEREST IN PROJCT. SPECIFICALLY, WE HOPE IT POSSIBLE TO MOVE SMOOTHLY FROM PROPOSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FEASIBILITY STUDY TO ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS, ASSUMING THAT IS FINAL RECOMMENDATION. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE FORTHCOMING STAGE DESIGNED IN SUCH A WAY THAT ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE FOR BUREC PERSONNEL TO STAY ON--AT COST AND AT UAEG REQUEST--TO ACT AS CONSULTANTS FOR ACTUAL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTIMN OF STRUCTURES.

3. RE INVOLVEMENT BF OMAN TERRITORY (PARA 5 REFTTEL) WHILE

WE WILL RAISE THIS POINT ONCE DEFINITE COMMITMENT MADE TO
PROCEED, WE AGREE FULLY WITH EMBASSY MUSCAT'S VIEW (PARA 2
MUSCAT 1104) THAT THIS IS MATTER THAT MUST BE RESOLVED
BETWEEN ABU DHABI AND MUSCAT. WE WILL POINT OUT PROBLEM
AND MAKE IT CLEAR IT IS UP TO ADG TO SQUARE THINGS WITH
OMAN.
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